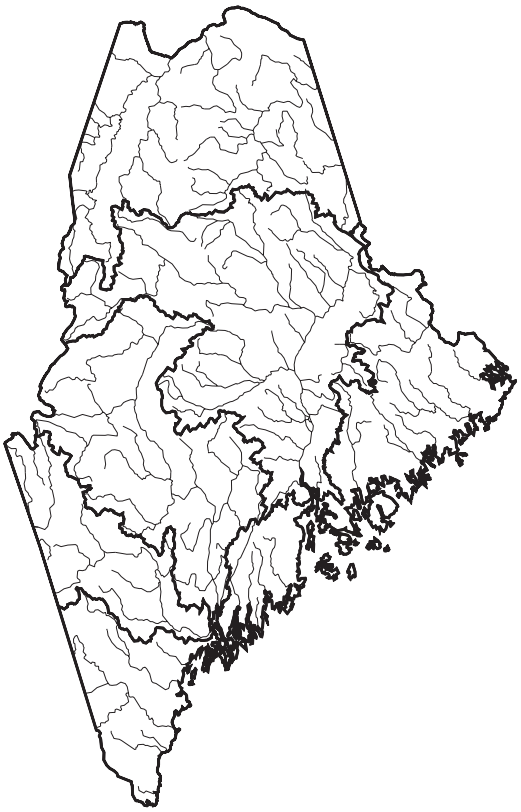
Maine



Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Maine 1996 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

Maine's water quality has significantly improved since enactment of the Clean Water Act in 1972. Atlantic salmon and other fish now return to Maine's rivers, and waters that were once open sewers are now clean enough to swim in. Ninety-nine percent of the State's river miles, 81% of the lake acres, and 100% of the estuarine waters have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses. All lake waters in Maine are impaired due to a statewide fish consumption advisory. Dioxin in fish tissue is the most significant problem in major rivers. Oxygen-depleting substances from nonpoint sources and bacteria from inadequate sewage treatment are the most significant problem in smaller rivers and streams. Lakes are impacted by oxygen-depleting substances and mercury from atmospheric deposition and nonpoint sources, including urban runoff, agriculture, and forestry activities. Bacteria from municipal treatment plants and small dischargers contaminate shellfish beds in estuarine waters.

Ground Water Quality

The most significant ground water impacts include petroleum compounds from leaking underground and aboveground storage tanks, other organic chemicals from leaking storage facilities or disposal practices, and bacteria from surface disposal systems or other sources. Maine requires that all underground tanks be registered and that inadequate tanks be removed. About 23,000 tanks have been removed since 1986. Maine also regulates installation of underground storage tanks and closure of landfills to protect ground water resources from future leaks.

Programs to Restore Water Quality

As the State makes progress in restoring waters impacted by point sources, new water quality problems emerge from nonpoint sources. Therefore, the most important water quality initiatives for the future include implementing pollution prevention, nonpoint source management, watershed-based planning, coordinated land use

management, and water quality monitoring. The State is linking pollution prevention with the watershed protection approach in a pilot project within the Androscoggin River basin. The State is providing local officials and citizen groups with technical assistance to identify problem areas and develop local solutions for reducing pollution generation throughout the watershed.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection recently completed a Strategic Plan that will be used to guide future environmental programs. The Strategic Plan is linked with the State of Maine's Performance Partnership Agreement with EPA. This Agreement provides an opportunity for greater dialogue and targeting on State priorities.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

Maine's surface water monitoring program includes ambient water quality monitoring, assimilative capacity and wasteload allocation studies, diagnostic studies, treatment plant compliance monitoring, and special investigations. Due to budgetary constraints, some of these activities are much more limited in scope than is desirable for accurately characterizing water quality conditions in Maine.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

[a] A subset of Maine's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.

[c] Maine includes coastal shoreline waters in their assessment of estuarine waters.

Individual Use Support in Maine

Designated Use[a]		Percent				
		Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Poor (Not Attainable)
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 31,672)[b]						
	Total Miles Surveyed	99				
	31,672		0	0	1	0
		99				
	31,672		0	1	0	0
		99				
	31,672		0	0	1	0
Lakes (Total Acres = 986,776)						
	Total Acres Surveyed	76				
	958,776		5	19	0	0
				100		
	958,886	0	0		0	0
		84				
	958,776		11	5	0	0
Estuaries (Total Square Miles = 2,852)[c]						
	Total Square Mile Surveyed	>99				
	2,851		0	0	<1	0
	-	-	-	-	-	-
		85				
	2,851		0	1	13	0
		100				
	2,851		0	0	<1	0

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.